



# ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT FACILITIES DIVISION

*contracting...engineering...real property...safety...health...environmental...space*

**Employee Update No. 9**

**December 29, 2000**

## ***INNOVATIVE FACILITIES SUPPORT INTO THE 21ST CENTURY !***

*~ FD Slogan ~*

### **Work & Water Flowing Again at Aquaculture**

**Center** Work on construction of the National Center for Cool and Cold Water Aquaculture (NCCCWA) is proceeding again after the general contractor defaulted. The original contractor was "terminated for default" in March 2000, after it informed its surety that it "was financially unable to complete the work under its contract." A takeover agreement was completed with the surety in late May, and a new general contractor was back onsite in June. When completed, the NCCCWA will be a state-of-the-art aquaculture research facility. It will consist of a laboratory/office building (30,000 square feet), a pre-engineered tank/aquaria building (25,000 square feet), and several different water treatment facilities. The ARS research

program will focus on health, genetics, and engineering research to increase production efficiency of several species for aquaculture production. Potential target species for the Center include rainbow trout, striped bass, salmon, and char.

Located in Leetown, West Virginia, only a few miles from the ARS Appalachian Fruit Research Station (Kearneysville), the NCCCWA will make its home on property leased from the U.S. Geological Survey's Leetown Science Center. The Leetown Science Center, established in 1931, is the oldest Federal fishery research facility.

The project is scheduled for beneficial occupancy in April 2001, with completion of pavement surface coarse and striping by the end of April. Prior to the default, the completion date had been September 1, 2000. The total project cost, including land acquisition, design, and construction is over \$15 million. The

design team consists of RMF Engineers (Baltimore, MD), Merrick and Company (Aurora, CO), and Montgomery Watson (Boise, ID). Jeannette Davies (FCB), Katherine Fisher (RPMB), and Mike Butler (FEB) are representing the Facilities Division (FD).

### **Semiannual Facilities Division Outstanding Employee Award**

**Patricia Burkins-Yondji**, Secretary in FEB, received the Semiannual FD Outstanding Award in November for providing superb office automation support in FD. Congratulations Patricia for a job well done!

Nominations for the next semiannual FD Outstanding Employee Award will be requested soon. Nominations may be submitted by FD employees or by an FD

customer.

This award began in February 1987 and was designed to recognize nonsupervisory FD employees who have gone the extra mile in delivering facility services to our customers. Please think back over the past 6 months and consider nominating someone that you believe has demonstrated outstanding customer service-- these can be FD employees you have worked with directly, or employees whose work you have observed.

#### **Award Recognition**

The last two SHEM video productions "ARS Radiation Safety Program" and "ARS Biological Safety Program" were recognized as finalists in the Telly Awards.

The Telly Awards is designed to give recognition to the best video productions and non-network programming throughout the nation. In the 21 years since its beginning, the Telly Awards have become a well known, highly respected national competition. The Telly has become one of the most sought-after awards in the TV, commercial, and video industry. Over 11,000 entries were submitted for this year's competition. More information on the Telly Awards is available at their website [www.telly.com](http://www.telly.com).

#### **Changes in FD**

**Tony Wimbush**, Procurement Analyst/Contract Specialist, accepted a position with the Procurement and Property Division (PPD), effective November 5. In addition to all of his other contracting activities, Tony, as the OSDBU, increased awareness, initiated upgrades and assisted numerous 8(a) small disadvantaged contractors in presenting their capabilities to the Agency.

**Christina Beaulieu**, FCB, accepted a Contract Specialist position with Patrick Air Force Base in Florida, effective December 30. Chris is an experienced CO, dedicated to her work. She even stayed on site in Florida through a hurricane to determine damages and schedule impacts! Now she will be doing all of this and have a great tan too!

Congratulations to **Darissa Simms** (RPMB) on her appointment as Space Management Team Leader in September 2000. Darissa joined FD in January 1999 as a Space Management Specialist from NASA. Darissa is a recent graduate of the Women's Executive Leadership Program.

**Bob Serrano** is RPMB's newest Space Management Specialist. Bob moved to the Washington, DC area from the other side of the world, Hilo, HI, where he was the Location Administrative Officer. Bob will assume the position vacated by

Darissa and will work with the REE agencies in the Washington Metro Area. Before moving to Hilo, Bob served as the Pacific West Area Property Management Officer, Albany, CA. Bob joined FD December 21, 2000.

**Terry Rupe** will be joining RPMB as a Realty Specialist on January 15, 2001. Terry comes to us from the US Army Corps of Engineers, Tulsa, OK. Terry will be working with Beltsville and Midwest Areas, as well as the National Agricultural Library. This will be the Rupe's first move out of the Oklahoma area so please welcome him.

**Ray Carrion** (FEB) started a 120-day detail in September with ITD as a Staff Assistant to the Division Director. While in ITD Ray has been very involved in ITD senior management responsibilities. Ray will complete his detail this month.

**Regina Herchak** (FCB) completed a 30-day detail in December as the Assistant Deputy Administrator for AFM. While on this detail, Regina gained experience in reviewing grievances, hot line complaint letters, and REE

Policies and Procedures.

**Hugene Fields** (FEB) is in the Executive Potential Program as previously reported. He completed a 60-day detail with National Safety Transportation Board in Washington, DC last month and is currently on his last required 60-day detail with Department of Defense in northern Virginia. Hugene will graduate from the program in March 2001.

### **Mr. Roark Goes to Washington!**

Some of you may have been asking: Where is Terry? Terry Roark, SHEMA Chief, has accepted a detail to USDA's Hazardous Materials Management Group in the Department in DC. While in this position, Terry is serving as a technical consultant on environmental protection issues in support of the Department's Hazardous Materials Management Program. Terry is assisting the Program Manager on a number of issues including: developing policy and guidance to achieve compliance with various environmental statutes, serving as the USDA representative on the National Response Team, and, serving as the Technical Training Program Officer to provide Departmentwide training to USDA's agencies regarding hazardous materials management

and related environmental compliance issues. Terry's detail is for 120 days, began November 6, 2000, and will end February 25, 2001. During his absence, Mike Blanchette and Pete Jovanovich will be splitting the SHEMA Acting Chief duties. Mike will be acting through December 31, 2000, followed by Pete beginning January 1, 2001, and ending February 25, 2001.

### **Procurement Assistants-- What we do!**

This is a new article for the newsletter that will provide information about the different jobs within FD and how they contribute to the overall mission of the division. FD is comprised of contracting officers, procurement assistants, procurement analysts, engineering project managers, space management specialists, environmental protection specialists, staff engineer, secretaries, real property management specialists, and then there's management! As you can see, our division is quite professionally diverse. Each quarter we will feature a different job series.

This quarter we will feature the procurement assistants (PA) in Facilities Contracts Branch. FD has three PA's: Margaret Carter, Carolyn Hendricks, and Sheila Anderson. They are quite experienced in doing their jobs in FD. FCB handles about \$300 million of design and construction contracts annually. As you can imagine ...there

is a lot of paperwork in the world of Government contracting! The PA's in FD are used to handling this volume of work especially during the end of the fiscal year. Awarding and monitoring design and construction contracts requires a tremendous amount of administrative support. The PA's support 12 contracting officers and procurement analysts. Their primary duty is to provide technical and administrative support in connection with preparing and awarding design and construction contracts. PA's prepare the documents to advertise for design and construction services (Invitation for Bids and Request for Proposals) for the division. PA's receive and process payments from contractors for bid documents and are responsible for recording bids at bid openings for construction services. They perform the background checks to ensure firms recommended for award are not on the debarred or ineligible lists for Government contracts. Once a contract is awarded, the PA's have to prepare and distribute the contract documents for execution. They process invoices for design and

construction services, as well as assemble and summarize numerous data pertaining to all reports for the branch. If a change is required on the contract, PA's prepare the documents for the contracting officer to issue a modification to the contract. PA's answer inquiries from the private sector and other Government agencies regarding the status of projects, payments, contract award information, advertisement of services, and bid opening results. Sometimes they are called upon to prepare the division's response to congressional inquiries. When a contract is complete, PA's process the close out documents and forward contract files to the record center.

The FD PA's maintain a sense of teamwork to get the job done. These individuals are hard workers, extremely critical in the operations of FCB, and a valuable resource within our division.

#### **FD Branch Goals Update**

For FY 2000 and 2001, the FD branches identified goals that will improve the effectiveness of FD. Updates are italicized below.

#### **Contracting:**

- Improve effectiveness of support to Contracting Officers (CO). *Procurement Assistants have added due date*

*tracking/followup files to alert the Contract Specialists of documentation due from contractors; implemented a quarterly Indefinite Quantity Contract Report that determines remaining unused award balance against maximum order limit; improved telephone assistance; and continue to look for additional ways to effectively increase their effectiveness to the CO's.*

- Investigate alternative A-E and contractor performance rating systems. *Assigned. Pending meeting with Corps of Engineers.*
- Develop CO procedures manual. *To be assigned in FY 2001.*
- Develop additional contract verbiage to add design/build capability to new A-E and Indefinite Quantity Contracts. *To be assigned. Joint effort w/FEB.*
- Develop a Master Solicitation package, Incentive Contract, to identify outstanding construction contractors and provide monetary incentives to them to use their talents to perform a quality contract, completed ahead of schedule, with few modifications or modifications including cost sharing or cost saving methods of construction. *Assigned.*

#### **Engineering:**

- Re-write generic Scope of Work

for A-E Services. *Complete and implemented March 2000.*

- Complete Phase II of the A-E accountability PET. *Assigned.*
- Publish an Engineering Project Manager Handbook. *Draft under review.*
- Review current policy on payment of design review and permitting fees by local entities. *Draft sent to OGC for opinion.*
- Successful close out of construction projects and develop lessons learned from recently completed construction projects. *Work in progress.*

#### **Real Property and Space:**

- Complete the relocation of CSREES and NASS employees (Waterfront Center and South Building). *CSREES: Target move date is February 2001 to complete all moves. Actual move date to be established. NASS: training room move delayed until later in FY 2001. Target move date for the training room has not been established. All other relocations are complete.*

- Complete an Interagency Agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation and implement the Quarters Management and Information System at the Headquarters and Area level. *Agreement is in place. Training is in progress.*
- Standardize user fees for the use of ARS controlled land and facilities. *Bulletin published. To be placed on AFM Website.*
- Initiate rewrite of Manual 245.1, ARS, Real Property Management. *Delayed until later in FY 2001 due to staffing shortages.*
- Initiate the interface of the Real Property Management Information System with the redesign of the Resource Management Information System (RMIS). *Work in progress.*

#### Safety Health and Environmental:

- Develop and conduct a Safety, Health, and Environmental Management related conference. *This conference will take place in November 2001. The conference will enhance SHEM education/training, and conduct training on the new Greening Executive Orders.*
- Develop and implement the ARS Industrial Hygiene

Program. *Implementation plan approved. Training of Collateral Duty Industrial Hygienists took place in Athens Georgia December 12-15, 2000.*

- Revise the ARS SHEM Program Evaluation System. This goal will look at the Onsite Assistance Review process, the Consolidated Assistance Review and Evaluation program, the annual safety inspections required by OSHA and the environmental audit and program review components of the Greening Executive Orders. *Work in progress. Executive Order portion will be addressed in April 2001.*
- Develop SHEM related standard operating procedures for inclusion in Manual 230.0 and for use as training documents at the Safety Conference. *Target completion date is March 2001. Schedule being developed.*
- Formalize the SHEMB Customer Feedback Process. This goal is designed to formally obtain customer input of the SHEMB program/policy development process. This may be accomplished through field visits, orientation/details to SHEMB by field personnel, and teleconferences designed to survey opinions concerning SHEMB performance. *Work in progress.*

#### Space Update

RPMB Space Management Team has been busy as usual. Here's the latest on move activities within REE:

#### CSREES:

Space on the first floor of the Waterfront building has been identified for Joint Institute for Food Safety Research (JIFSR), CRIS, REEIS, and Civil Rights. This will involved three separate moves of CSREES personnel from NAL, Aerospace Building, and the South Building. CRIS, REEIS, and JIFSR moved in December. Civil Rights Staff is expected to move February 23, 2001.

South Building Modernization: USDA received \$26 million in FY 2001 to construct the second phase of the South Building Modernization. Phase II scope will involve the fourth wing. NASS and ARS will be impacted by this project. The design of the renovation was complete in 1998. The Department is in the process of updating the design documents and plans to start construction in the March/April timeframe.

#### NASS:

FD has also started working on

the relocation of the NASS training room currently located on the sixth floor of the fourth wing. This is the last step in vacating NASS space in the fourth wing in preparation of Phase II South Building renovation.

ARS:  
FD Space Management Team and ITD's LAN room currently located in 1470, tailhouse section, will relocate to the third floor, rooms 3858-3870. The Department will use vacated space for the renovation of the fourth wing. Due to delays in renovating the space, the move is now expected to take place in January 2001.

HRD Conflict Resolution Program is targeted to relocate from Building 3 to Building 2 in January 2001. Construction is complete on the two offices for this staff and workstations are in place with the exception of two parts that are on back-order.

#### **ARS FY 2001 Budget**

The President signed the Agricultural Appropriations bill on October 29. ARS received over \$898 million for program and \$74.2 million for buildings and facilities (B&F). The B&F account is a \$21.7 million increase from the FY 2000 appropriations. In addition to the B&F appropriations, the Department has received HWC funds--ARS'

allocation in FY 2001 is \$3.25 million. FD will be continuing facility modernization of major research centers, new construction, and HWC activities at the following locations:

Maricopa, AZ	Albany, CA
Hilo, HI	Urbana, IL
Ames, IA	Manhattan, KS
Orono, ME	Beltsville, MD
Stoneville, MS	Miles City, MT
Plum Island, NY	Logan, UT
NAL	
National Arboretum, DC	

#### *HWC Locations:*

Beltsville, MD	Ames, IA
Plum Island, NY	Orlando, FL
Savannah, GA	Shafter, CA
Brownwood, TX	

Also in the FY 2001 Appropriations Bill, ARS received authority to purchase land at Florence, SC.

#### **Upcoming Special Observances**

Employees are encouraged to participate and attend special observances programs.

Employees must receive approval from their supervisor to participate.

Upcoming Special Observances:

- Martin Luther King, Jr., Commemoration will be held on Thursday, January 11, 2001, at the South Building in DC in the Jefferson Auditorium at 10 a.m.
- Black History Month--February

- Women's History Month--March
- Professional Secretaries Week (celebrated the last full week)--April
- Take Our Daughters/Sons to Work (fourth Thursday)--April
- Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month --May

For more specific information about the programs, please call Carolyn Moore or Darlene Butler on 301- 504-6507 or visit the ARS EE/CR office website <http://www.ars.usda.gov/eeo/>.

#### **FD Vacancy Announcements**

The following vacancies are located on the HRD homepage at: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/afm/hrd/hrdhomepage/empopp.htm>

- Contract Specialist/Procurement Analyst, GS-1102-13 opened December 26, 2000 and will close January 9,

2001. Vice Tony  
Wimbush.

- Contract Specialist, GS-1102-13 will open January 2, 2001 and close January 15, 2001. Vice Chris Beaulieu.

**We Need Articles!**

If you have any articles or suggestions to improve the FD Newsletter, let Valencia or Pat know.

*"The time is always right to do what  
is  
right"  
~Martin Luther King, Jr.~*